

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O R 151730Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7470
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 1197

EXDIS

FROM LOW
LONDON PASS MOOSE; MAPUTO PASS AMB LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: JUNE 14 MEETING WITH GAYLARD

1. SUMMARY: IN AFTERNOON SESSION WITH GAYLARD JUNE 14,
WE CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF IDEA BROACHED BY DAVID SMITH
IN THE MORNING OF A SECRET LOW-LEVEL EXPLORATORY MEETING
BETWEEN ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED (STATE 151837). GAYLARD
GOT BOGGED DOWN IN TRYING TO PIN DOWN PROCEDURES AND AGENDA,
REFLECTING SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES WE WILL FACE IN TRYING
TO TURN THIS OPENING IN AS FAVORABLE A WAY AS POSSIBLE.
NEVERTHELESS, THE SESSION CONFIRMED THAT WE WOULD EXPLORE
WITHOUT CONDITIONS AT THIS POINT THE POSSIBILITIES OF A
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SECRET LOW-LEVEL MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 14, GRAHAM AND LOW,
ACCOMPANIED BY POLITICAL COUNSELOR TAYLOR, MET WITH
JACK GAYLARD, CONSTITUTIONAL SPECIALIST GEORGE SMITH,
AND SECRETARY OF LAW AND ORDER PETER CLAYPOLE.
DISCUSSION CENTERED ON DAVID SMITH'S PROPOSAL IN THE

MORNING MEETING WITH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DEPUTIES FOR A SECRET LOW-LEVEL MEETING BETWEEN ALL PARTIES CONCERNED. IT WAS AGREED THAT IN EXPLORING THE IDEA OF A SECRET MEETING WITH THE PF, GRAHAM AND LOW WOULD NOT IDENTIFY SALISBURY AS THE ORIGINATOR BUT WOULD STATE THAT IN SALISBURY THEY HAD GAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT SUCH A MEETING WAS POSSIBLE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE INTERIM REGIME. GAYLARD SUGGESTED THAT SECRECY FOR THE FIRST MEETING WAS ABOUT ALL THAT WE COULD HOPE FOR.

3. GAYLARD THEN RAISED THE SUBJECT OF THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE PROPOSED MEETING. HE ASSERTED THAT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WOULD FIND DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING PARITY AT SUCH A PRELIMINARY MEETING OR AT ANY SUBSEQUENT FORMAL CONFERENCE AND WAS WORRIED ABOUT ESTABLISHING A PRECEDENT. HE ARGUED THAT EACH PARTY INVOLVED SHOULD HAVE ONE REPRESENTATIVE, GIVING THE SALISBURY GROUP FOUR AND THE PF TWO. LATER, GAYLARD SAID THIS QUESTION COULD BE CONSIDERED. GAYLARD ALSO RAISED THE SUBJECT OF THE AGENDA AND ARGUED IT SHOULD FOCUS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND POLITICAL QUESTIONS. THE THRUST, HE SUGGESTED, SHOULD BE TO WIN THE PF OVER TO THE BROAD CONSTITUTIONAL CONCEPTS AGREED TO BY THE INTERNAL GROUP. HE SAID THE CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE WOULD COMPLETE ITS WORK BY THE CONFIDENTIAL

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END OF JULY AND IT WOULD BE BEST TO TACKLE THIS PROBLEM FIRST. WE ARGUED THAT THE AGENDA SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED AND THAT THE PF ATTACHED HIGH PRIORITY TO THE MILITARY QUESTION.

4. CLAYPOLE HELPFULLY SUGGESTED THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE TOO TIED UP WITH PROCEDURES. HE SAW THE MEETING AS ONE HELD ON THE BUREAUCRATIC LEVEL WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF LISTING ISSUES AND ASSIGNING THEM PRIORITY. THE RESULT WOULD THEN BE SEEN BY THE PRINCIPALS WHO WOULD DECIDE ON NEXT STEPS.

5. GAYLARD SAID WE WERE "CLUTCHING AT STRAWS." THE MEETING WOULD BE A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO "KEEP THE THING MOVING" AND TO SEE IF WE COULD SOFTEN THE PF STAND AND WHETHER THEY WOULD BE "WILLING TO TALK TO US WITHOUT YOU." GRAHAM REPLIED THAT THE PF WOULD PROBABLY MAINTAIN THE FICTION THAT THEY WOULD ONLY BE TALKING TO THE BRITISH, WHO COULD BRING ALONG WHOM THEY WISHED. THUS, WE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO BE PRESENT. GRAHAM SUMMED UP THE PROPOSED SECRET MEETING AS A LOWER LEVEL SESSION LEADING UP TO A HIGHER-LEVEL GATHERING.

6. GAYLARD ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY POINT IN GRAHAM AND LOW RETURNING TO SALISBURY BEFORE THEY HAD CONTACTED NKOMO AND MUGABE ON THIS SUBJECT. GRAHAM SAID THAT THE NEWS OF HIS AND LOW'S PROJECTED RETURN NEXT WEEK WAS ALREADY OUT. HE ALSO REFERRED TO CHIKEREMA'S REMARK IN THE MORNING MEETING THAT THE INTERIM REGIME WOULD WELCOME A MOVE TO BRING "OFFICIALS WHO WILL STAY HERE AND SEE WHAT WE ARE DOING." GRAHAM SUGGESTED THAT CONTINUATION OF THE SHUTTLE WOULD GET PEOPLE USED TO OUR PRESENCE. LATER GRAHAM TOLD LOW THAT HE INTENDED TO RECOMMEND THAT THE UK EXPLOIT CHIKEREMA'S OPENING TO ASSIGN ANOTHER UK OFFICER TO THEIR SALISBURY OFFICE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 1197

EXDIS

FROM LOW
LONDON PASS MOOSE; MAPUTO PASS AMB LOW

7. COMMENT: THIS MEETING CONFIRMED THAT SMITH AND HIS COLLEAGUES, WHETHER AS A TACTIC OR NOT, ARE PREPARED TO EXPLORE SERIOUSLY A LOW LEVEL SECRET MEETING AND POSSIBLY TO SHOW SOME FLEXIBILITY ON MODALITIES. THE QUESTIONS RAISED BY GAYLARD, HOWEVER, REFLECT SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WE WILL FACE IN GETTING THIS IDEA OFF THE GROUND AND MAKING IT PRODUCTIVE. OUR OBJECTIVE

SHOULD BE TO KEEP THE CONCEPT OF THE MEETING AS OPEN-ENDED
AS POSSIBLE AND TO MAKE PARTICIPATION ON AS RESPONSIBLE A
POLITICAL LEVEL AS POSSIBLE. IN PARTICULAR WE WILL HAVE
TO RESIST GAYLARD'S IDEA THAT THE SALISBURY SIDE COULD BE
REPRESENTED BY CIVIL SERVANTS SUCH AS HIMSELF.

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